ROYALS
ENTER: RONAN THE ACCUSER!
004
MARVEL
EWING
SILAS
CHARALAMPIDIS

EXPERIMENTED UPON LONG AGO BY ALIENS KNOWN AS THE KREE, *THE INHUMANS* ARE A RACE OF SUPER-BEINGS WHO CAN UNLOCK AMAZING ABILITIES VIA THE MYSTERIOUS ELEMENT *TERRIGEN*.

BUT AFTER LEARNING THAT TERRIGEN WAS POISONING EARTH'S MUTANT POPULATION, THE QUEEN OF THE INHUMANS, *MEDUSA*, DESTROYED ALL TRACES OF IT, MEANING THERE WILL BE NO MORE NEW INHUMANS. HEAVY WITH GUILT, MEDUSA ABDICATED THE THRONE—LEAVING THE INHUMANS WITHOUT THEIR ROYAL FAMILY.

BUT IF THE ROYALS CAN NO LONGER RULE INHUMANITY...THEY CAN STILL SAVE IT.

ROYALS

MARVEL BOY CLAIMS THERE IS A SECRET BURIED IN THE REMAINS OF HALA, THE KREE HOMEWORLD, THAT CAN RESTORE THE FUTURE OF THE INHUMAN RACE, SO THE ROYAL FAMILY AND A COUPLE OF NEW INHUMANS HAVE GONE WITH HIM ON A JOURNEY INTO SPACE.

BUT THEY WERE SOON HIT WITH TWO SURPRISES: MEDUSA IS DYING FROM A MYSTERIOUS ILLNESS, AND *"BLACK BOLT"* IS ACTUALLY *MAXIMUS THE MAD* IN DISGUISE. BEFORE LEAVING EARTH, MEDUSA HAD SENTENCED HER TREACHEROUS BROTHER-IN-LAW TO LIFE IN PRISON, BUT MAXIMUS USED HIS PSYCHIC POWERS AND AN IMAGE INDUCER TO SWITCH PLACES WITH HIS BROTHER.

THE LOCATION OF BLACK BOLT'S PRISON IS UNKNOWN. DESPITE THEIR UNWANTED PASSENGER, THE ROYALS MUST CONTINUE ON THEIR FATEFUL JOURNEY TO HALA.

MEANWHILE, FIVE THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW, *THE LAST INHUMAN*—AN ANCIENT MAXIMUS—CHRONICLES THE EVENTS OF THE ROYALS' QUEST, FORETELLING THAT SEVEN LEFT EARTH, BUT ONLY SIX WILL RETURN...

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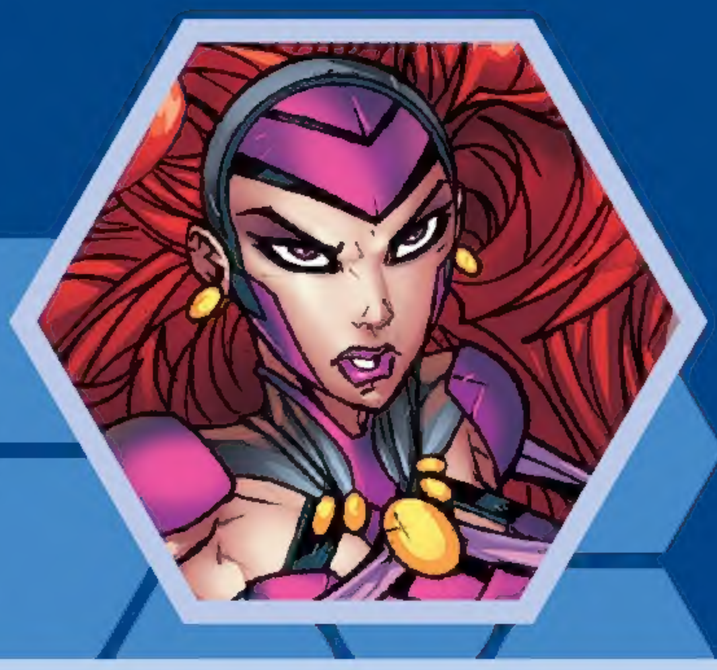

MEDUSA

Wife of Black Bolt. Her hair is stronger than steel—and entirely under her control.

MAXIMUS

Brother of Black Bolt. Super-genius and mind-controller. Completely insane.

CRYSTAL

Sister of Medusa. She has total control over air, earth, fire, and water.

GORGON

Cousin of Black Bolt. One stomp of his hooves makes the earth tremble.

SWAIN

A new Inhuman. She can push emotions and opinions in her favor.

MARVEL BOY

Kree explorer from another dimension. Engineered with insect traits for combat superiority.

FLINT

A new Inhuman. Rock and stone obey his thoughts—the bigger, the better.

Dust and Roses

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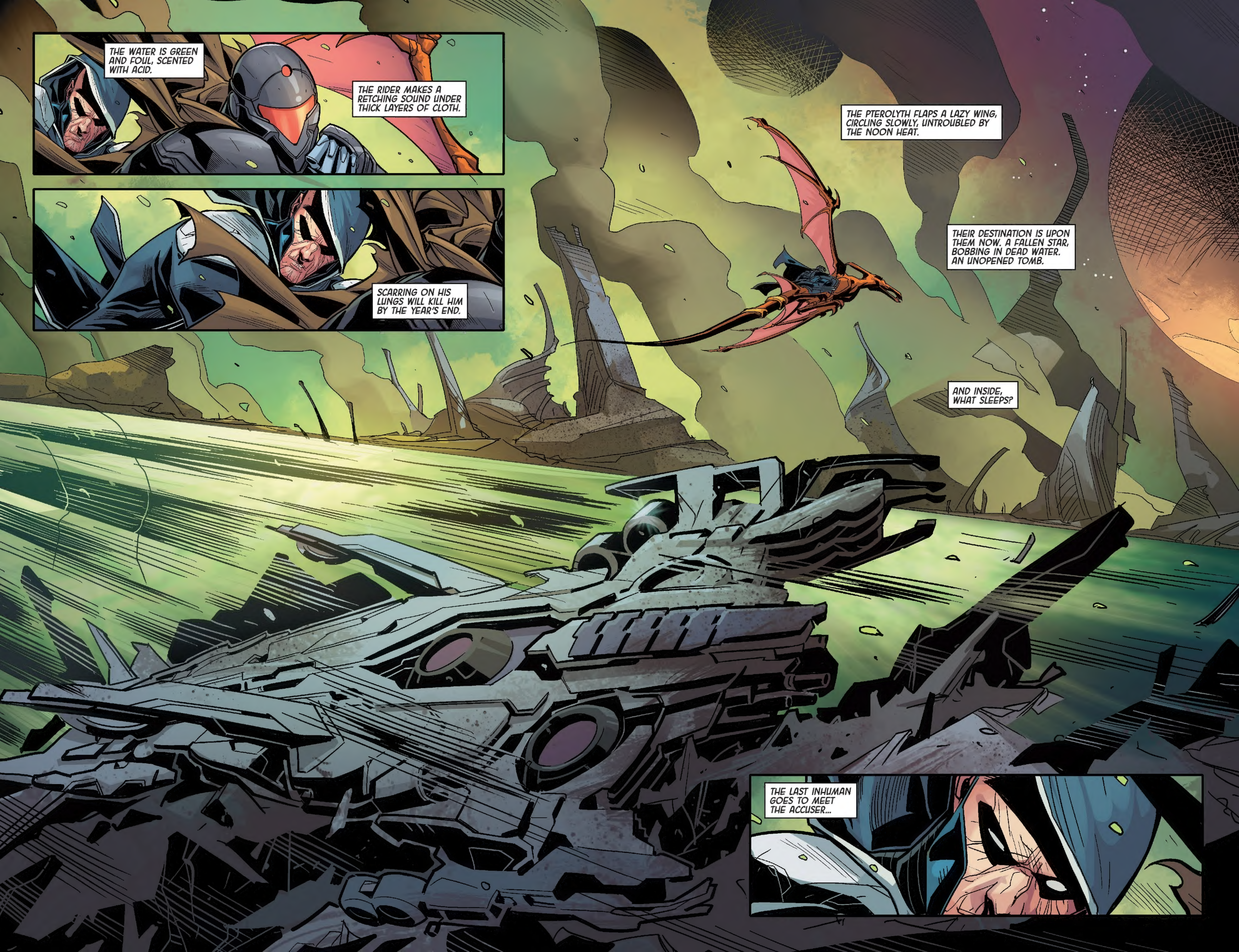
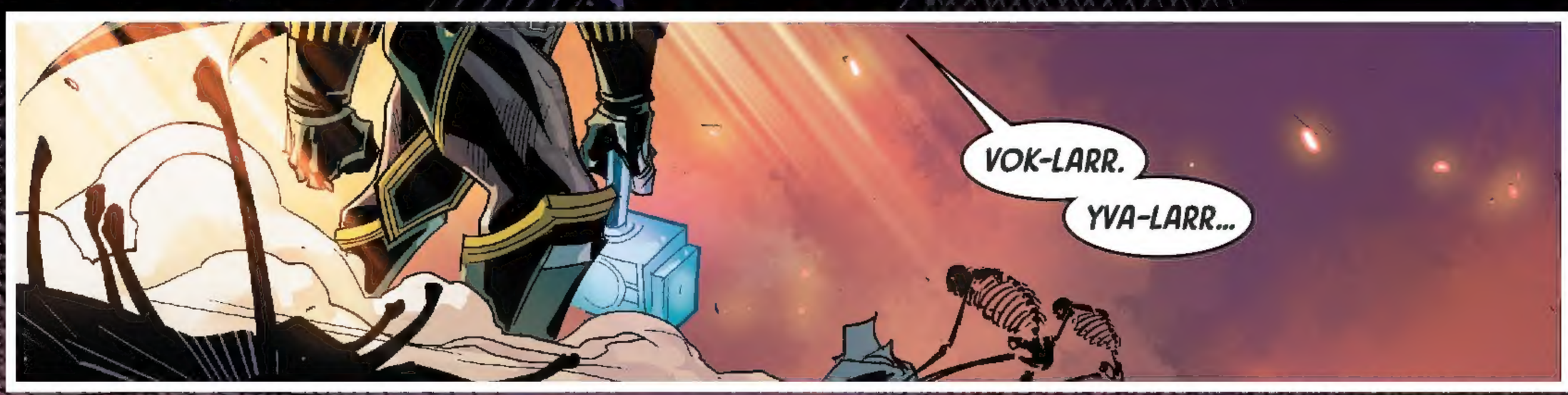
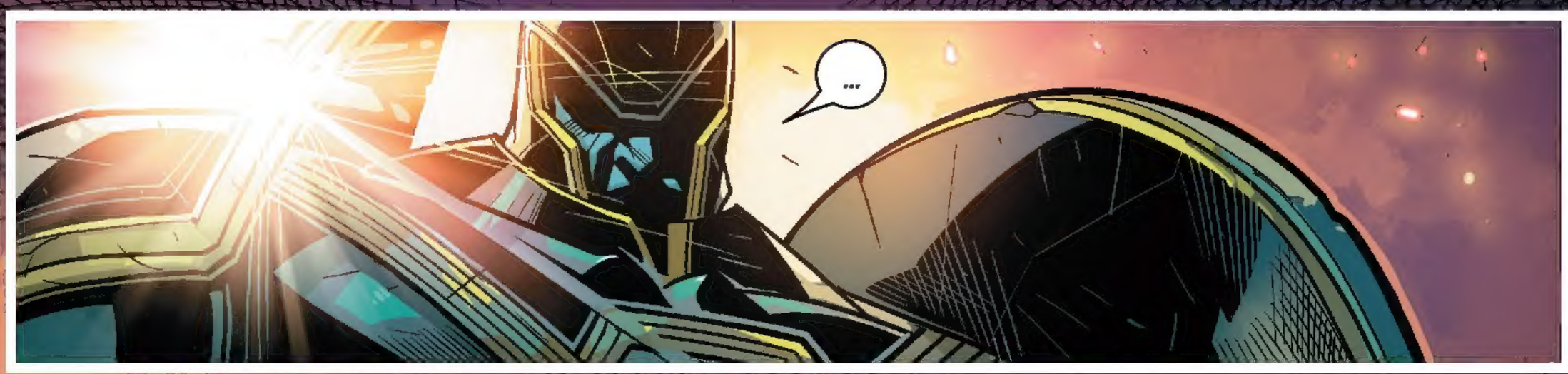

THE WATER IS GREEN AND FOUL, SCENTED WITH ACID.
THE RIDER MAKES A RETCHING SOUND UNDER THICK LAYERS OF CLOTH.
SCARRING ON HIS LUNGS WILL KILL HIM BY THE YEAR'S END.
THE PTEROLYTH FLAPS A LAZY WING, CIRCLING SLOWLY, UNTROUBLED BY THE NOON HEAT.
THEIR DESTINATION IS UPON THEM NOW. A FALLEN STAR, BOBBING IN DEAD WATER. AN UNOPENED TOMB.
AND INSIDE, WHAT SLEEPS?
THE LAST INHUMAN GOES TO MEET THE ACCUSER...

...AND REMEMBERS ANOTHER DEAD WORLD...

...LONG AGO...

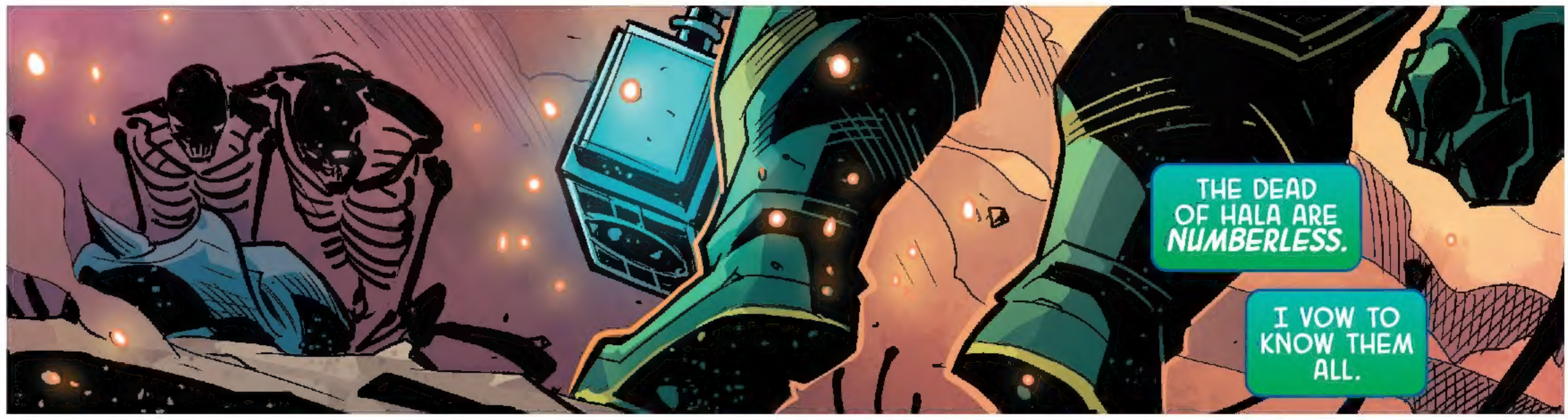
NOW.

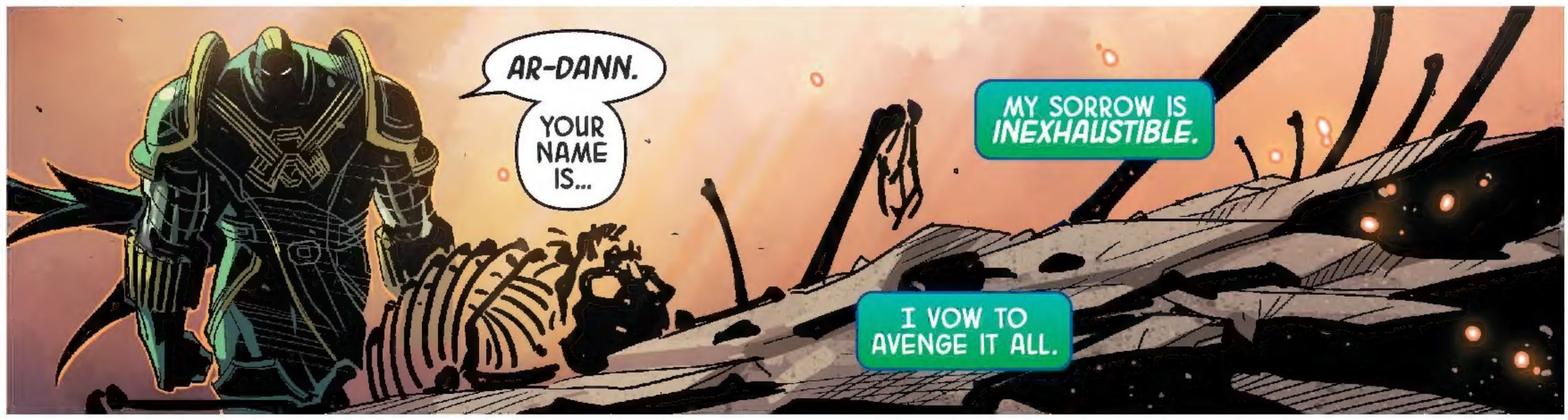




EVEN NOW, THERE ARE MOMENTS THAT STRIKE ME DOWN.

YOUR NAMES ARE *KNOWN.*





FOR I AM *RONAN...*

TRESPASSERS ON THE SACRED SOIL?

VERY WELL. THE KREE WAY IS *SUPREME...*

...I AM THE ACCUSER.
AND I VOW TO DEFEND IT.
THE ASTARION.
CAN WE LAND THIS THING ANY FASTER, SWAIN?
NOT IF I WANT TO PUT US DOWN SAFELY, NO.
THE PLANET'S NOT STABLE--I NEED TO FIND A LANDING ZONE THAT WON'T COLLAPSE UNDER US!
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'LL BE NEEDED ANYWAY, GORGON.
FINDING MARVEL BOY'S BURIED SECRET WILL BE A DELICATE SCIENTIFIC MISSION.
WE DON'T WANT THE HOOF-BRAINED MAN STUMBLING ABOUT BREAKING THINGS AND MOANING ABOUT HIS BAD BACK...

I'LL BE NEEDED FOR SECURITY--
OH, PLEASE. IT'S A DEAD PLANET, GOATBOY.
THERE'S NOBODY DOWN THERE FOR YOU TO BEAT UP...
QUITE RIGHT, MAXIMUS.
BUT ONCE YOU'VE LANDED...THERE WILL BE.
MAYBE I'LL GET STARTED RIGHT NOW--
GORGON--
--HOW IS YOUR BACK TODAY?
AGGRAVATING, COMMANDER MEDUSA.
WHY DO WE LET HIM SIT UP HERE, ANYWAY? I'M PRETTY SURE WE'VE GOT A NICE, COZY BRIG.
BUT THEN MY POWER WOULDN'T STOP HIM FROM MIND-CONTROLLING US--
OH, AS IF I'D BOTHER.
BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, GOT THE T-SHIRT, IMPRISONED THE BROTHER...
--AND HE WOULDN'T BE BLOCKING ME, SO I'D BE WORRYING ABOUT EMOTIONALLY MANIPULATING YOU ALL...INSTEAD OF...
...FLYING THE...
...OH CRAP.

EVASIVE ACTION! HOLD ONTO SOMETHING!
YOUR DEAD PLANET JUST LAUNCHED SOMETHING AT US!
WHAT--?
I'M TRYING TO GET A VISUAL HERE--
--OH.
WHEN DID WE PISS OFF THOR?
KRAKKLE
CRUNCH

WE JUST LOST A WING!
SEALING OFF THE BREACH--
COMMANDER-- WE NEED TO GET TO THE ESCAPE PODS! NOW!
AH. YEEEES. THE ESCAPE PODS.
THAT... MIGHT BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT...
DON'T SAY IT--
...BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THE WING.
THAT JUST FELL OFF.
EVERYONE TO THE COCKPIT!
I'VE GOT THIS!
CRASH POSITIONS!
DAMN IT-- I CAN'T KEEP HER STEADY!
WE'RE GOING DOWN!
GOT TO--LEVEL HER OUT--
...
I HATE YOU.
NOH-VARR!
NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US!
WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE, APPARENTLY. IT'S TERRIBLY EXCITING...
WELL, SORRY TO SPOIL IT.
POCKET BATTLEFIELD--

--ENGAGE.
WHAT THE--?
"POCKET BATTLEFIELD"...?
ONE OF MY WEAPONS. A PORTABLE AREA OF PROGRAMMABLE LOCAL PHYSICS. IT ONLY HAS JUICE FOR A MINUTE...
...BUT DURING THAT MINUTE, GRAVITY, MOMENTUM AND INERTIA ARE WHAT I SAY THEY ARE.
INERTIA? ARE YOU SAYING--
I'M SAYING I JUST TURNED A PLUMMETING DEATH TRAP INTO A BOUNCE HOUSE.
SO CRASH THE HELL OUT OF HER, CAP'N.
KRADA-KROOOMM

EVERYONE OUT!
SHE COULD STILL BLOW UP--
NOT MY SHIP.
AND WE HAVE BIGGER PROBLEMS. WHOEVER BROUGHT THE ASTARION DOWN IS STILL...
...OUT THERE...
INHUMANS.
YOU CONQUERED HALA ONCE.
AND THEN, WHEN YOU WERE DONE WITH CONQUEST... WHEN YOU HAD MADE OUR EMPIRE YOURS...
...YOU GOT BORED.
YOU RAN.
NOW HALA LIES DEAD, AND THE EMPIRE IS SHATTERED.
BUT I AM STILL THE ACCUSER...
...AND I ACCUSE YOU.

RONAN, THAT'S...INSANE. YOU WERE THERE--YOU KNOW IT WASN'T THAT SIMPLE.
THE KREE SUPREME INTELLIGENCE WAS IN CHARGE WHEN HALA... WHEN IT...
CRYSTAL, I DON'T THINK HE'S LISTENING--
THEN WE'LL MAKE HIM!
I DON'T CARE HOW BIG HE'S GROWN, FLINT--WE BEAT HIM ONCE, WE CAN--
--AAARHH!
I AM NO LONGER THE RONAN YOU ALL HUMILIATED, GORGON.
I SUBMITTED TO THE BLACK VORTEX-- TO THE FIRE OF CHANGE--
--AND GAINED POWER.
THE POWER TO BREAK WORLDS...
...AND TO BUILD MY OWN.
WHERE...?
YOU'VE FORGOTTEN ME.
MYRRA?
LOVE?
AYE. YOUR OLD LOVE. THE MOTHER OF YOUR CHILDREN.
YOU'VE FORGOTTEN ME, HAVEN'T YOU?
NO. I-- I COULDN'T. NEVER.
I STILL WAKE FROM DREAMS IN WHICH YOU NEVER DIED. EVERY DAY...
...EVERY DAY I FEEL THE PAIN.
BUT NOW THE PAIN IS LESSENED, ISN'T IT? NOW YOU'VE FALLEN FOR ANOTHER.
YOU FORGOT YOUR LOVE, GORGON PETRAGON.
YOU STAND ACCUSED.

YOU ALL STAND ACCUSED.
YOU WANT TO FORGET ME, DON'T YOU, SWAIN? YOU'RE SICK OF ME.
YOU WISH YOU HAD A GIRLFRIEND WHO COULD LOVE YOU BACK.
DON'T SAY THAT! THAT'S NOT TRUE, ASH!
IT'S--IT'S NOT--
BUT THEN, YOU NEVER LOVED US, SON.
WE DIED FOR YOU, JAYCEN. AND YOU NEVER. NEVER.
NEVER ONCE SAID YOU LOVED US...
I WAS A KID--I WAS STUPID--
PLEASE--
HOW MUCH BLOOD IS ON YOUR HANDS, MAD CHILD? HOW MANY WORLDS?
YOUR BROTHER WASN'T THE DANGER. IT WAS YOU.
ALWAYS YOU.
PFFT.
IT WAS YOU. YOU TURNED YOUR BACK.
YOU SENT ME INTO THE DARKNESS.
YOU BROKE MY HEART.
YOU BROKE MY HEART, NOH.
KATE... I...
I KNOW.
YOU BROKE MY HEART.
AND THAT... BROKE THE WORLD.
AND NOW...

...NOW YOU WILL STAND TRIAL FOR IT *ALL*, CRYSTAL AMAQUELIN.
SO TELL ME.
HOW DO YOU *PLEAD?*
TO BE CONTINUED...

ROYAL MAIL

Send letters to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM marked "OKAY TO PRINT."

Hi there, Inhum-fans! Al Ewing here, answering your latest batch of Royal Mail—until YOU, the readers, give us a better letter column title! Keep marking your letters OKAY TO PRINT and sending them in to mheroes@marvel.com—we'll print the best! In the meantime, let's dive right in…

This is my first time writing in, so I guess I'd just like to say, "Hey what's up?" Anyway, I really enjoyed INHUMANS PRIME—I thought it was excellent at setting up the future stories being told in the Inhuman mythology. I'm very new to the Inhumans, and to be honest, I wasn't going to pick up ROYALS #1—it was kind of an impulse buy—and I'm so glad I that I did! I enjoyed ROYALS much more than INHUMANS PRIME and am extremely excited to see where Al Ewing takes us in the future--and don't get me started on Jonboy Meyers' artwork. It is absolutely beautiful, an amazing team at the helm of this title.

Sincerely,
Simon

Hi, Simon—glad you enjoyed the book! Hope you're still getting a thrill out of where we're taking it!

Terrigen reacting against Medusa's system! Terrigen sentience confirmed? Or not?

I figured out about the mental case impersonating Black Bolt the minute Iwan Rheon was cast lol! Could you explain how Jaycen managed to pick up Pluto? Call Me Bettie and...

Ibrahim

"Sentience" is a little strong, Ibrahim—but there might be some inner poetry at work there. It's certainly not quite scientific—but not quite magic, either. Terrigen occupies that strangely liminal space between the two, and that's a place where metaphors can be dangerous.

As for Jaycen and Pluto, Jaycen's power is to control stone and rock, and his limitation is that he's actually better with big masses rather than small pieces. So, for instance, moving a big boulder with his power is very easy for him, but moving a tiny grain of sand is extremely difficult. With that in mind—well, Pluto is a VERY big boulder. So, logically, it's the easiest thing for him to move. It's that not-quite-scientific logic again…

Of course, in the words of Zoidberg, that raises further questions—after all, Earth itself is even BIGGER…

Al,

I spent some time this weekend reading an old THOR run I'd pieced together, #255-266 (Len Wein, with Big John Buscema penciling most of it, though "Whippersnapper" Walt Simonson comes on at the end). It's one of the epic space-based storylines: a bunch of Asgardians in a wooden longboat spaceship looking for Odin. It's terrific fun, and reminds me how much I love this kind of storyline...which is exactly what ROYALS seems all about! So I'm happy to be along for this ride, too.

One thing, though: those THOR issues reminded me of an old favorite, the Recorder, who popped into Asgard often and liked to tag along with Thor in those old '70s stories. I suspect his Rigellian bosses would happily send him along with the Inhumans for the duration.

Yours,
Dr. Nate

Thanks, Dr. Nate! It's an honor to be compared to pretty much any THOR run, especially if it's a THOR run that involves going to space. As for the Recorder…hmm, it's been a long while since we've seen that guy, or any of his fellow Recorders—or, for that matter, the Rigellians. While I can't promise they'll turn up in ROYALS, I can tell you that we're only a couple of months away from the return of one of Marvel's fondest-remembered space races in these very pages...

And that's all the space we have this month! Keep sending in your letters-page title suggestions, and we'll see you back here next month for more ROYAL MAIL!

ADDITIONAL READING:

Curious about Ronan the Accuser's spiffy new powers and the destruction of Hala? Check out **GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY & X-MEN: THE BLACK VORTEX TPB**. The saga of Ronan and Crystal's love officially began with their marriage in **WAR OF KINGS #1**, and ended in tragedy in **FF (2011) #21**. For more on Flint's past, look for **INHUMAN VOL. 1: GENESIS TPB**. Marvel Boy and Kate Bishop (a.k.a. Hawkeye) killed Cupid in **YOUNG AVENGERS VOL. 3: MIC-DROP AT THE EDGE OF TIME AND SPACE TPB**. And for more on Swain's girlfriend, Ash, see the **ALL-NEW INHUMANS: GLOBAL OUTREACH TPB.**

ROYALS

NEXT: ROYALS #5

AND FOR MORE INHUMANS, CHECK OUT:

ZONE